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Of course many economies have been effected, notable among these being the shearing of exorbitant salaries, the cancellation of the de luxe trains, the prohibition of all advertising and soliciting and the saving of millions of train miles through the designation of direct routes, etc. All told, incalculable savings have been effected in a thousand different directions, and the American people were on the point of believing that, financially speaking, government control of the railroads had proven itself a success. Still, earnings were far below par and then came the proposal to increase the combined payrolls some \$100,000,000 annually. Not in the palmiest days of American railroading could the companies have stood this strain, but now we learn that the plan is quite simple. According to the dispatches, Director-General McAdoo proposes a sweeping increase of passenger fares and freight rates, approximating 25 per cent. This, it is estimated, will provide the necessary revenues to run the roads as they ought to be run in war time.

The people will pay for this, of course, as they pay for everything else, and the probabilities are they will pay the increased bill with good grace, in view of its being deemed an urgent war measure. But in return, however, they have a right to expect railroad operations to rise to the top notch of efficiency. Otherwise, the experience they are encountering in the matter of government regulation is liable to leave a bad taste in their mouths. It still looks like pretty much of an experiment.

DON'T DISHEARTEN SAMMY.

S TRANGE to say, the chief curse of American army life today is directly chargeable to the folks back home. Too many of the letters received from friends and family are filled with complaints and expressions of concern that do not tend to cheer and encourage the boys in camp. Commanding officers are all of one mind in declaring that this kind of correspondence is all too common and that it has a disconcerting and depressing effect upon the soldiers, who, at best, find it difficult to master their homesickness at times. Such letters are bound to discourage the boys, subdue their spirits, shake their confidence in themselves and their country, and thus seriously impair the morale of the soldiery generally.

So it is that the military authorities are deeply concerned over the situation. They urge the importance of writing frequently—as a plain measure for bolstering the spirits of each individual soldier and sustaining the morale of the army—but they are equally insistent that the correspondence shall be of a cheerful character. Common sense ought to dictate as much. It is worse than folly—it is a crime—to burden the boys at the front with bad news from home. And the sorriest feature of all is that many of the letters are filled with misrepresentations at that. Instead of agonizing the soldier's mind with thoughts of real or imaginary troubles back home, every care should be taken to shield him from the pretty alarms and annoyances of everyday life among his folks. Better no letter at all than one that recites affairs that are certain to prey upon his mind.

All this arises, unwittingly, of course, on the part of the anxious hearts at home. But if our men in uniform are to be steeled for the struggle, they must first be made to feel that all is well with their loved ones. Discouraging news from home leads only to discontentment, and that to a thousand dangers. It isn't fair to the boys. Fancy any French mother writing in such fashion to her boy on the battle front. We have yet to learn the necessity of sparing the feelings of our soldiers.

A billion-dollar deficiency bill now attracts little attention in a country that once threw a political party out of power because of a "billion-dollar Congress."—Springfield Republican.

With Bulgarian and Turkish troops joining the Prussians in Belgium, the prospect brightens a bit for less barbarous warfare there.— Boston Herald.



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